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ABSTRACT

The Walton High School (New York) Pre-Teaching Program, established in 1984, involved approximately 25 teachers and interns. Student interns did classroom clerical tasks, worked individually with students, and taught lessons. A State Incentive Grant for a Consortium for Educational Mentorship provided an opportunity for further development of the pre-teaching program. A long-term goal of this year's program was to encourage students to enter teaching and teaching-related professions. Beginning in the fall of 1985, 44 Walton juniors and seniors served as interns in classes in various subject areas. The interns received training and practice in paraprofessional and pre-professional skills. They took attendance and performed related classroom tasks, worked one-on-one with students, and taught some lessons. Most of the interns were matched with an individual teacher. Walton teachers supervised the interns, developed a training manual, and participated in a series of training sessions. The program was conceived as a consortium effort which would involve institutions at the primary, secondary, and college level. Ongoing communication was maintained with the administration of Lehman College, which provided support to the program in the form of consultations, facilities, clerical assistance, and leadership of the teacher training sessions. This report describes program background, project objectives, evaluation procedures, program implementation, and student outcomes. Conclusions and recommendations are included. (JD)

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CONSORTIUM FOR EDUCATIONAL MENTORSHIP
1985-86

FINAL REPORT

OEA Evaluation Report

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October, 1986

CONSORTIUM FOR EDUCATIONAL MENTORSHIP 1985-86

FINAL REPORT

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SUMMARY

Walton High School established its student-intern Pre-Teaching Program in 1984 with tax-levy funds. Funding allowed one teacher to provide training for interns. Approximately 25 teachers and interns participated in the program. Students did classroom clerical tasks, worked individually with students, and taught lessons.

In fall, 1985, the school received a $72,000 State Incentive Grant to further develop its Pre-Teaching Program. The Walton staff worked closely with staff from Lehman College. The program achieved mixed success in meeting its three objectives: to develop and print a pre-teaching guide; to offer participating teachers seminars on providing instruction to interns in teaching methodology; and to provide student interns with experience in the classroom.

In June, 1986, Walton High School and Lehman College published The Pre-Teaching Guide, an orientation to and a set of guidelines for the Pre-Teaching Program. The lateness in the publication of the manual, originally scheduled for September, 1985, deprived 1985-86 interns of a useful resource. The teacher training workshops enabled Walton teachers to discuss a range of educational issues with members of different departments and with Lehman College staff. The workshops were primarily concerned with providing general teacher training. They, therefore, diverged from the original plan which tied the workshops more closely to the needs of the Pre-Teaching Program. Beginning in fall, 1985, 44 Walton juniors and seniors served as interns in classes in various subject areas. The program gave students the opportunity to learn some basic teaching skills. According to interns, participating teachers, and students in their classes, the experience was a generally positive one. With few exceptions, however, teachers and interns had limited opportunities to meet together for planning and feedback.

Among the findings of the evaluation are the following:

- The Pre-Teaching Guide should be distributed to interns and participating teachers at the beginning of the term and used as a resource for orientation and training.
- Training sessions should focus on teaching teachers to teach interns how to teach.
- Wherever possible, schedules of teachers and their assigned interns should be coordinated so that they can meet on a regular basis for at least one period a week during the school day.

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I. INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Walton High School established its student-intern Pre-Teaching Program in 1984 with tax-levy funds. Partial funding for a teaching position allowed one teacher to use a before-school period two or three time a week to train interns. She recruited approximately 25 teachers and interns to participate in the program. Students did classroom clerical tasks, worked individually with students, and taught lessons.

In fall, 1985, the school received a $72,000 State Incentive Grant for a Consortium for Educational Mentorship to further develop its Pre-Teaching Program. A long-term goal of this year's program was to encourage students to enter teaching and teaching-related professions. Beginning in fall, 1985, 44 Walton juniors and seniors served as interns in classes in various subject areas. The interns received training and practice in paraprofessional and pre-professional skills. They took attendance and performed related classroom tasks. They also worked one-on-one with students and taught lessons. Most of the interns were matched with an individual teacher. In a few instances, program administrators assigned more than one intern to a teacher or two teachers to one intern. Walton teachers supervised the interns, developed a training manual, and participated in a series of training sessions.

The program was conceived as a consortium effort which would involve educational institutions at the primary, secondary, and college levels. Originally, Walton staff was to work with

both Community School District (C.S.D.) 10 and Lehman College. However, the plan to assign some Walton interns to classes in C.S.D. 10 elementary and intermediate schools proved logistically cumbersome; as a result, staff made all student placements within Walton High School. The high school staff worked closely throughout the year with staff from nearby Lehman College. The Walton project coordinator maintained ongoing communication with the Lehman College administrator who served as her institution's coordinator. Lehman College provided support to the program in the form of consultations, facilities, clerical assistance, and leadership of the teacher-training sessions.

PROGRAM GOALS

In spring, 1985, staff of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction of the New York City Board of Education conducted needs assessment meetings with teachers participating in the 1984-85 Pre-Teaching Program. The information gathered at these meetings was among the factors considered in the formulation of program goals for the 1985-86 Pre-Teaching Program. These implementation goals were:

- To develop a teacher guide;
- To offer participating teachers seminars on providing instruction to juniors and seniors in teaching methodology; and
- To provide student interns with preliminary skills and experiences in teaching-related professions.

Although not explicitly stated as a goal, proposal developers

expected to see a relationship between program participation and both attendance and achievement.

According to the proposal, achievement of these goals would be measured by completion and production of the teacher guide; administration of a questionnaire to teachers after each teacher training session; assessment of the attendance of students with interns in their classes and comparison of their attendance with that of students who did not have interns. The Office of Educational Assessment/High School Evaluation Unit (O.E.A./H.S.E.U.) measured the objectives as written in the proposal. However, there is some question as to whether the way the objectives were written is appropriate.

SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

O.E.A./H.S.E.U. used a number of qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate the Pre-Teaching Program. Among the techniques were:

- review of the manual, interns' logs, teachers' assessments of intern performance, workshop minutes, and other program records and materials;
- interviews with mentoring teachers and other program staff;
- observations of workshops;
- analysis of questionnaires completed by workshop participants and by students in classes with interns; and
- analysis of attendance data of interns, of a group of students in classes with interns, and of a control group of students in classes without interns.

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

Chapter I includes information about program background, project objectives, and evaluation procedures. Chapter II describes program implementation. Chapter III presents student outcome data. Chapter IV contains conclusions and recommendations.

II. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The project proposal called for development and distribution of a manual for teachers, delivery of a series of workshops to train teachers to enhance students' teaching skills, and assignment of student interns to classes in various departments. In addition, students were to go on trips and staff was to videotape lessons by master teachers and interns. In the course of the school year, several changes were made in the originally-conceived program.

THE PRE-TEACHING MANUAL

According to the proposal, two teachers were to work with the Curriculum Educational and Production Unit of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction to write, edit, field test, revise, and produce a teachers' guide for use with program interns. They were to have begun in summer, 1985, completed a first draft by September, 1985, and printed the piloted version by June, 1986.

Funding delays affected the development of the pre-teaching manual. Funding did not arrive until the beginning of the fall, 1985 term. Program staff anticipated that they would complete the draft by the end of February, 1986, but they subsequently changed the target date to late in the spring term. The Pre-Teaching Manual, a Walton High School-Lehman College publication, was published in June, 1986. Field testing of the manual will occur during the 1986-87 school year.

An editorial board composed of the program coordinator and three teachers produced the manual. Teachers and interns had significant input. At two all-day workshops in early April, 1986, teachers from the English, science, social studies, mathematics, and foreign language departments met in departmental groups to develop lessons to teach interns lesson planning skills. Interns described problems they had encountered in the classroom so that workshop participants could include real-life situations and potential solutions in the manual.

The Pre-Teaching Manual had originally been intended as a guide to assist teachers in imparting instructional skills to student interns. Staff from Walton and Lehman wanted to address the manual to both teachers and interns. They considered printing two separate manuals, but decided to include everything in a single manual so that teachers and interns could easily read the material addressed to each other.

The 179-page-long published version focused largely on the interns; only one of its eight chapters is devoted to the teachers. The chapters addressed to the interns cover the role of the intern, teaching skills such as lesson planning and questioning, and how to deal with problem situations. The manual's longest chapter contains sample lesson plans in five subject areas. The nine appendices include various forms for evaluating the interns. The manual is available both as a bound volume and in a looseleaf version which allows for the addition and deletion of pages.

TEACHER TRAINING

The project proposal called for Lehman faculty, supervised by the Lehman coordinator, to conduct ten monthly two-hour after-school workshops at Walton High School from September, 1985 to June, 1986. The workshops were intended to introduce teachers in the Pre-Teaching Program to ways of presenting teaching methodology to their interns. Student interns could also attend the training sessions. After the program began, Walton and Lehman staff revised the schedule to provide for fewer, but longer, workshops. They wanted more time for training than was possible after school. They also realized that after the ninth period, the last scheduled period of the school day, many of the interns had jobs and other obligations which would prevent them from attending. For example, interns had been given preference for paid after-school tutoring jobs at Walton High School. The new schedule consisted of eight workshops: one, for teachers only, met for two-and-a-half hours after school; two met for six hours each during the spring vacation; and the others met for six hours on each of five Saturdays. The first workshop took place in December, but subsequent workshops did not begin until mid-March.

Over 30 teachers participated in each of five workshops; four of these workshops attracted from 35 to 45 teachers, including some who were not among the teachers with assigned interns. The two spring vacation workshops involved only 11 teachers; this relatively small number was, however, appropriate for the task-oriented group which was developing the manual.

Teacher attendance was low (N=12) only at the program's initial workshop in December. In March, 1986, program administrators modified the proposal budget to provide stipends for teachers who took part in training sessions.

The two workshops that attracted the largest number of students were Evaluating and Supporting Interns (N=16) and More Effective Schools (N=12). Fewer than a half-dozen students attended each of the other workshops. For most interns, Saturday scheduling created conflicts similar to those present after school.

The workshop topics offered dealt far less with ways of improving intern knowledge of teaching techniques than had originally been planned. The proposed workshop series, for example, included two sessions apiece on strategies and tactics for mentoring/tutoring; observing and supervising student interns; and working with under-prepared learners. The Walton and Lehman coordinators changed the training focus: they thought that their staff, which had had little recent training, would benefit more from being brought up-to-date on more general educational topics than from receiving training on intern-specific issues. The actual series began with a session on both English as a Second Language and evaluating and supporting interns. Later workshops dealt with such topics as dropouts, manual development, more effective schools, critical thinking, and developing learning modules. Participants in the final session worked in separate groups on computer use and writing techniques.

For the most part, teachers rated the workshops very favorably. At every workshop but the first, they filled out an evaluation survey developed by O.E.A./H.S.E.U. Eighty percent of workshop participants completed these surveys. Over 90 percent of the teachers responding indicated that the subject covered in each workshop was dealt with adequately. Ninety-three percent of the teachers responding found being in workshops with interns beneficial to their own learning. Many of the teachers had little or no previous participation in staff training. Several praised the interdepartmental nature of the training and welcomed the opportunity to work with teachers from throughout Walton.

Forty-nine percent of the teachers responding considered the workshops primarily of long-term use. Another 18 percent considered them primarily of immediate use. Twenty-four percent maintained that the workshop had both long-term and immediate use. The remaining nine percent gave miscellaneous answers, identifying the workshops` primary use as theoretical or as long-term and theoretical.

Teacher opinion varied from workshop to workshop. For example, in only one instance did more teachers consider a workshop of immediate, rather than only of long-term, use. Over two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents (N=39) in the workshop on critical thinking indicated it was of immediate use alone. In response to an open-ended question, more teachers in this workshop than in any of the others indicated that they would incorporate into their classes specific techniques discussed in

the workshop. On the other hand, none of the respondents (N=20) at the drop-out prevention workshop, a general discussion of the educational system, and only six percent of respondents (N=32) at the similarly wide-ranging exchange at the workshop on more effective schools identified its value as primarily immediate.

Using a scale of one (very ineffective) to five (very effective), teachers gave the least effective ratings to the two workshops they identified as of less immediate use to them. Only 30 percent of respondents gave a very effective rating to the Dropout Prevention workshop. The response to the More Effective Schools workshop was better, with 47 percent of respondents giving it the highest rating. At the other four workshops, however, at least 57 percent of respondents gave each the highest rating.

STUDENT INTERNING

In fall, 1985, 33 student interns were assigned to 21 teachers; in spring, 1986, 38 interns were assigned to 29 teachers. A total of 44 students participated as interns during the two terms. Staff selected interns on the basis of nominations by teachers and guidance counselors, as well as through self-nomination. Criteria included good attendance and conduct, strength in a specific subject area, and an ability to work with peers and teachers.

Interns worked with teachers in academic departments, in physical education classes, and in the high school's nursery.

Several students worked in English as a Second Langauge classes or in subject area classes with students who were learning basic English language skills. Interns spent a period a day with their assigned teacher; a few interns had to split their time between two teachers. Teachers reviewed intern lesson plans, observed their teaching and other classroom interactions, and provided them with oral and written evaluations. Interns engaged in a variety of classroom activities: they checked homework, went over review sheets, helped with laboratory procedures, took attendance, translated directions into a student's native language, and taught lessons. As part of the program, interns went on trips to Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. The planned videotaping of lessons by master teachers and interns did not take place because the video equipment did not arrive until late May.

The 14 participating teachers interviewed by the evaluator were generally positive about their experience in the Pre-Teaching Program. They mentioned self-confidence as the area in which interns had shown the greatest improvement. Most had great difficulty finding time to meet with their interns. They therefore supervised them during class or immediately before or after the class period. Only a few were able to meet with their interns after school or during a preparation or lunch period.

Students in four classes with interns filled out a questionnaire which measured their response to their experience with the interns. Of these 51 students, 82 percent enjoyed

classes with the interns. Seventy-eight percent found the interns definitely helpful to their classroom learning; only two percent did not find them helpful. In response to an open-ended question, students most frequently cited the following as positive aspects of having an intern in their class: easier communication (55 percent); more individual attention (47 percent); and positive role models (20 percent). Students included fewer negative than positive responses. Most common negative responses concerned the intern's lack of clarity or knowledge (20 percent), and the student's resentment and lack of respect for the intern (18 percent).

Intern logs reflected similar strengths and weaknesses. Most interns enjoyed working closely with students and relished the point at which students began to go to them with questions. They worried about the responsibility of teaching a class and about the degree of their knowledge about subject matter. One intern taught the same mathematics level he was presently taking with another teacher. Another intern prepared for a class on Shakespeare with extensive research at the Lehman College library. Most interns reported initial negative responses to their presence from one or more students in a class. Many reported a subsequent change in student attitude toward them as the term progressed.

A priori, no specific relationship appears to exist between the attendance of students in classes with interns and the achievement of the program objective relating to the interns'

classroom activities. However, O.E.A./H.S.E.U. has included such data here in order to fulfill the proposal stipulation. O.E.A./H.S.E.U. compared the average attendance rates of two groups of students: those who had received the services of an intern and those who had not. O.E.A./H.S.E.U. compared the average attendance of a sample of students (N=56) with interns in their classes with their attendance during an earlier term when they did not have interns. The average attendance of these students (N=56) increased from 91 percent to 94 percent. Over two terms, the control group of students (N=26) who had no interns in their classes showed a slightly different pattern, decreasing in average attendance from 93 percent to 91 percent. None of these differences are statistically significant.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Pre-Teaching Program at Walton High School achieved mixed success in meeting its evaluation objectives. By the end of the 1985-86 school year, it had developed and printed a pre-teaching guide, offered participating teachers a series of training workshops, and provided student interns with experience in the classroom. In each of these areas, however, the absence of adequate and timely resources, training, and supervision for the interns meant that the program did not, in its first year of funded operation, reach its potential.

The Pre-Teaching Guide contains information which will be of value in any future pre-teaching program at Walton High School; it will also be of potential use at other high schools with similar student internship programs. In the course of the school year, program staff decided to develop a manual directed almost entirely to the interns, rather than a manual which, as initially planned, would be a teachers' guide. This decision addressed the interns' need for a uniform written orientation to and a set of guidelines for the Pre-Teaching Program. Delay in the development and publication of the manual, however, deprived interns of a useful resource which might have facilitated their participation in the 1985-86 Pre-Teaching Program.

The teacher training workshops enabled Walton teachers to discuss a range of educational issues with members of different departments and with Lehman College staff. Teachers gave very

positive evaluations of the workshops, especially of those which they considered of more immediate classroom application. They were very enthusiastic about the beneficial nature of being in workshops with interns. Intern attendance, however, was sparse. Many had paid jobs and other responsibilities during the scheduled meeting times; unlike the teachers, the interns did not receive stipends for participating. As a result, a potentially valuable opportunity was missed for interactions between teachers and interns. The proposal had outlined workshops which, in part, would deal with concrete ways for teachers to assist, observe, and supervise interns. The workshops turned out to be primarily concerned with providing general, albeit useful, additional training for the teachers. They, therefore, diverged from the original plan which tied the workshops closely to the specific needs of the Pre-Teaching Program.

The program gave students the opportunity to work with teachers in the classroom and to learn some basic teaching skills. According to interns, participating teachers, and students in their classes, the experience was a generally positive one. With few exceptions, however, teachers and interns had limited opportunities to meet together for planning and feedback. Those who could met after school or during a preparation or lunch period. But scheduling and time constraints meant that most teacher-intern meetings occurred during or immediately before and after the class period. Interns were trying to understand the nature of their new responsibilities,

master subject matter sufficiently to impart it to individuals or groups, and cope with students' attitudes toward them. The scope of this task underscored the interns' need for ongoing, private, and regularly-scheduled meetings with their assigned teachers.

On the basis of the evaluation findings, the following recommendations are aimed at enhancing program benefits:

1. The Pre-Teaching Guide should be distributed to interns and participating teachers at the beginning of the term and used as a resource for orientation and training.

2. Training sessions should focus on teaching teachers to teach interns how to teach.

3. Stipends should continue to be given to teachers for their attendance at training sessions and be offered, as well, to interns in order to encourage their increased participation in these sessions.

4. Wherever possible, schedules of teachers and their assigned interns should be coordinated so that they can meet on a regular basis for at least one period a week during the school day.

5. The program's objectives and the appropriateness of the ways in which they are measured should be rethought.